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UNCLAS ROME 003959

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AF](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [IT](#) [PREL](#) [UNDP](#) [AFGHANISTAN](#)

SUBJECT: ITALY AGREES ON LEVERAGING POLITICS OF AFGHAN AID

REF: A. STATE 141043

[1](#)B. STATE 142782

[1](#)1. (SBU) A/DCM DELIVERED REF POINTS TO MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR, GIANCARLO ARAGONA. ARAGONA NOTED THAT MOST OF ITALY'S AFGHAN AID CONTRIBUTIONS ARE CHanneled THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (IOS) RATHER THAN DISPERSED DIRECTLY OR THROUGH NGOS. CAUTIONING THAT SUCH IOS CAN BE A CUMBERSOME MECHANISM OF DISBURSEMENT, HE URGED THE USG TO JOIN THE GOI IN IMPRESSING UPON THEM THE IMPORTANCE OF QUICKLY GENERATING TANGIBLE BENEFITS FOR WHICH CREDIT WILL GO TO THE ATA. HE PROMISED TO TRY TO SPEED ITALIAN DISBURSEMENTS.

COOPERATIVE APPROACH

[1](#)2. (SBU) A/DCM MET ON AUGUST 8 WITH MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR GIANCARLO ARAGONA, HIS DEPUTY, CLAUDIO BISOGNIERO, AND UNCLASSIFIED

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SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN ENRICO DE MAIO TO DISCUSS AFGHAN AID (AND OTHER ISSUES REPORTED SEPTEL). A/DCM RECOGNIZED ITALY'S EXISTING FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO AFGHANISTAN, COMMITMENTS TO OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, STABILIZATION EFFORTS AS WELL AS LEADERSHIP IN THE AREA OF AFGHAN JUDICIAL REFORM. HE THEN ASKED HOW, AS PARTNERS, WE COULD USE OUR ASSISTANCE TO MORE EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT THE STABILITY AND VIABILITY OF THE ATA. HE ALSO ASKED SPECIFICALLY WHETHER THE USD SEVEN MILLION ITALY PLEDGED TO THE WORLD BANK'S AFGHAN RECONSTRUCTION TRUST FUND HAD BEEN DISPERSED. HE UNDERScoreD THE NEED TO GET ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN RAPIDLY.

WE NEED TO MOVE FURTHER DOWN THE FUNDING PIPELINE

[1](#)3. (SBU) ARAGONA "FULLY AGREED" WITH WHAT HE CALLED "A SOUND POLITICAL OBJECTIVE" OF ENHANCING THE ATA AND KARZAI'S CREDIBILITY AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE. HE NOTED THAT ITALY PLEDGED USD 47 MILLION TO AFGHANISTAN IN TOKYO. ALL OF IT, HE SAID, HAS NOW BEEN COMMITTED AND THE CHANNELS FOR ITS DISBURSEMENT IDENTIFIED. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE MOST OF THE AID IS GOING THROUGH IOS (ARAGONA MENTIONED THE WORLD BANK AND UNDP IN PARTICULAR), HE UNDERSTOOD THE DIFFICULTY OF ENSURING THAT KARZAI AND THE ATA GET CREDIT FOR THE ENSUING PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS. ARAGONA PROMISED TO MAKE THE POINT TO IOS THAT EMPHASIS MUST BE GIVEN TO RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE ATA. HE URGED THE USG DO SO AS WELL, SUGGESTING THAT DONOR COUNTRIES SHOULD UNDERScore THE IMPERATIVE OF USING ASSISTANCE TO ENSURE THAT TANGIBLE PROJECTS ARE SEEN SOON AND ARE LINKED IN THE PUBLIC MIND TO UNCLASSIFIED

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THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ATA. ARAGONA PROMISED THAT THE GOI WOULD REVIEW ITALY'S COMMITMENTS IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE ATA AND STABILIZE AFGHANISTAN.

[1](#)4. (SBU) SPECIAL COORDINATOR FOR AFGHANISTAN ENRICO DE MAIO POINTED OUT THAT ITALY HAS ALREADY GIVEN HALF OF ITS TOKYO PLEDGE. HE HAS REQUESTED THE OFFICE OF COOPERATION TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON THE STATUS OF AFGHAN AID AND EXPECTS TO HAVE MORE DETAILS IN THE COMING DAYS. DE MAIO ADDED THAT DONORS SHOULD DO MORE THAN ADVISE THE IOS TO ENSURE PROJECTS REFLECT CREDIT ON THE ATA; "WE SHOULD INSTRUCT THEM" TO WORK MORE QUICKLY AND TO EMPHASIZE THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE. HE SUGGESTED DONORS NEGOTIATE CONDITIONALITIES TO THEIR FUNDING WHICH STIPULATE RAPID DELIVERABLES LINKED TO THE ATA.

COMMENT

[1](#)5. (SBU) THE ITALIANS TAKE OUR PRINCIPAL POINTS AND ARE COMMITTED TO REVIEWING THEIR ASSISTANCE TO LEVERAGE ITS POLITICAL VALUE FOR THE ATA -- SOONER, RATHER THAN LATER. POST SECONDS THE GOI SUGGESTION THAT WE AND OTHER DONORS DRIVE THE MESSAGE HOME TO THE IOS AS WELL.

[1](#)6. (U) MINIMIZE CONSIDERED - KABUL
SEMBLER

UNCLASSIFIED

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